

Amendments to the Abstract

Please replace the originally filed Abstract with the following new Abstract:

A communication method comprises dividing each of a plurality of optical carrier signals into a plurality of intermediate signals wherein each optical carrier signal carrying all of a plurality of wavelength division multiplexed initial data signals and each intermediate signal carrying all of the multiplexed initial data signals over a predetermined wavelength range, separating each intermediate signal into the respective data signals contained therein, and combining corresponding data signals separated from the intermediate signals into their respective initial data signals.